

VZCZCXRO3165
PP RUEHGR
DE RUEHPO #0788 3461843
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 121843Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8981
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1594

UNCLAS PARAMARIBO 000788

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

WHA/CAR FOR LAURA LUFTIG, INR FOR ROBERT CARHART

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [NS](#)

SUBJECT: BOUTERSE, SEEMINGLY FIT, MAKES APPEARANCE AT PARTY
CONGRESS

REF: PARAMARIBO 00707

[¶1](#). (SBU) The National Democratic Party (NDP) re-elected former military dictator Desi Bouterse by acclamation as undisputed chairman and leader of the party at its December 9 party congress. In his keynote address, Bouterse blasted the government and ministers for corruption and mismanagement and said that his party was ready to step in and set things right. Bouterse's participation in the party congress, his first public appearance in months, seems to throw doubt on rumors that he was in ill health (reftel). The NDP congress was one day after the 24th anniversary of the December 1982 murders of 15 adversaries and opponents of the Bouterse military dictatorship. Bouterse called for a &truth commission in lieu of the trial against him planned to open in early 2007, which would possibly settle the criminal case against him out of court. He called the court case a waste of resources.

[¶2](#). (SBU) COMMENT: While many take Bouterse's involvement in the murders for granted, others are reluctant to speak out against him for fear of intimidation--and still others blithely declare him innocent. The former military dictator still casts a dark shadow over Surinamese politics. END
COMMENT
SCHREIBER HUGHES